

the last we saw of that partridge. I still wonder if he grew a new set of breast feathers.

CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS,
TEHRI-GARHWAL CIRCLE, UTTAR PRADESH,
DEHRADUN, U.P.
November 24, 1959.

B. P. SRIVASTAVA

3. TODDY CAT (*PARADOXURUS HERMAPHRODITUS*) AND RUSSELL'S VIPER (*VIPERA RUSSELLI*)

On the morning of 30-11-1959 while motoring through the forest on the Mysore frontier road, I found on the roadside a toddy cat and a large Russell's viper lying dead just opposite each other. The deaths were recent as rigor had not yet set in. The snake had been bitten on the head, the neck, and the tail below the vent; the rest of the body bore no teeth marks. The toddy cat had been bitten on the head near the ear. Obviously they had been fighting with fatal results to both. What is the reason for this jungle tragedy? Will the Editors or any of my readers make a suggestion?

I know small birds and mammals are included in the menu of these palm civets, but why did it tackle this stout, five-foot long Russell's viper, a most venomous antagonist? Vice versa could the snake have taken the aggressive role? This appears improbable in view of the fact that the palm civet was 3 feet 4 inches long and weighed 6 lb., rather too big for the snake to swallow.

Probably they met suddenly and a fight ensued. The snake's venom acted quickly resulting in the death of its opponent on the spot and the snake itself died there from the several bites on its head and neck. Or the toddy cat having formerly successfully tackled smaller and harmless snakes attacked and killed the Russell's viper and carried it to the roadside where it died in its turn.

15 PERUMALKOIL STREET,
FORT, COIMBATORE,
December 15, 1959.

B. SUBBIAH PILLAI